



## Common Questions about the End of Course Assessments (ECAs)

### What are the ECAs?

- The ECAs are tests administered to students completing instruction in Algebra I, English 10, and Biology I courses.
- The Graduation Examination consists of two assessments: Algebra I and English 10, passing both will meet the graduation testing requirement.
- Participation in Biology I ECA fulfills the requirement for No Child Left Behind by assessing students in high school science. Students are not currently required to pass Biology to graduate, but it will be noted on students' transcripts.

### When are ECAs administered?

- The ECAs are offered four times during the school year: Fall, Early Winter, Late Winter, Spring. A summer window is available to students completing instruction in the course.
- ECAs are administered when the student completes instruction in the course.

### What is assessed on the ECAs?

- The ISTEP+ End of Course Assessments (ECAs) are criterion-referenced assessments developed specifically for students completing instruction in Algebra I, Biology I, or English 10, and assess the student's mastery of the Indiana Academic Standards for the entire course.

### How are the cut scores established?

- Cut scores (scores that must be attained to pass) were established in 2010 based on recommendations made by teacher committees. They use the "Bookmark" standard setting process which requires their expert analysis of the content of the assessment and the review of individual test items as a part of setting the cut scores.
- These recommendations are reviewed by an independent panel of testing experts, and the cut scores recommended by the IDOE were then presented to the Education Roundtable and State Board of Education for action. The final cut scores were adopted on August 3, 2010.

### What results should I expect to receive?

- Every student tested receives a comprehensive *Individual Student Report* showing overall student performance in terms of *Pass+*, *Pass* or *Did Not Pass*.
- Families of students in all tested grade levels will have a limited window to access an online copy of their students' short answer and essay responses. Contact your local school for more information.
- A student's latest ISTEP+ ECA test results must be included on the student's high school transcript.

### What if my student didn't pass?

- Students who did not pass ECAs are entitled to remediation from the school to address any areas of need.
- Ask your student's teacher and guidance counselors about extra help in areas that he/she didn't pass.
- A student may take the ECAs until he or she meets the *Indiana Academic Standards* for Algebra I and English 10: students can take the ECAs a maximum of once each semester.
- Retests include only the graduation examination(s) (Algebra I and/or English 10) in which the student did not attain a score at or above *Pass*.

### Which students can get accommodations?

- Students with disabilities, students receiving special education services, and students who are Limited English Proficient (LEP) may be entitled to assessment accommodations.
- The approved ISTEP+ accommodations outlined in *Appendix C* of the *Indiana Assessment Program Manual* apply to End of Course Assessments (ECAs).